Gauge conversion, electrification and extension of trains in Gujarat

270. SHRI LALITBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many proposals for conversion of rail lines into broad gauge in Gujart are pending;

(b) how many proposals to start new trains, extension of trains from present termination and to start EMU trains in Gujarat are pending with the Ministry; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Gujarat is deprived of rail services, considering the new trains, broad gauge conversion, electrification, etc. in comparison to other States and Union Territories?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No Gauge Conversion project included in the budget is pending in Gujarat at present. However, 8 Gauge Conversion projects are in progress, out of which 3 have been completed and residual works are in progress.

(b) and (c) The boundaries of states do not form critera for introduction of trains on Indian Railways. However, introduction of a train between Rajkot and New Bhuj *via* Wankaner-Maliya Miyana-Gandhidham and DMU trains on Wankaner-Morbi-Dahisara section on newly converted section is under consideration. Besides, the following trains included in the Railway Budget 2002-2003 presented on 26.2.2002 in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha will also serve the passengers of Gujarat:-

New Trains:

1. Bangalore-Gandhidham Express *via* Hubli (weekly)
2. Ahmedabad-Varanasi Express *via* Allahabad (weekly)
3. Jaipur-Mumbai (Bandra Terminus) *via* Surat (tri-weekly)
4. Ahmedabad-Rajkot Express
5. Ahmedabad-New Bhuj Jan Sahatabdi Express

Extension:

1. 5045/5046 Gorakhpur-Ahmedabad Express (weekly to Okha)

2. 4845/4846 Jodhpur-Ahmedabad Suryanagari Express to Bandra four days a week

3. 1269/1270 Rajkot-Bhopal express to Jabalpur *via* Bina-Katni (bi-weekly)

Frequency:

1. 1463/1464 Rajkot-Jabalpur Express from four days a week to five days a week

2. 6509/6510 Ajmer-Bangalore Express from weekly to bi-weekly.

Privatisation of Unremunerative Rail Lines

271. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified unremunerative rail lines for privatisation;

(b) if so, the details therof;

(c) the terms and conditions laid down for privatisation of unremunerative rail lines; and

(d) the benefits likely to accrue to the railways by privatising unremunerative rail lines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise

(c) Ministry of Railways is contemplating concessioning of uneconomic branch lines and not their privatisation, which means grant of permission to private operators to operate uneconomic branch lines. The terms and conditions for such concessioning are not yet finalised.

(d) The objective is to reduce losses incurred by the Railways on these unremunerative branch lines.

Budget Hotels and Rail Yatri Niwas at Tirupati

272. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state: